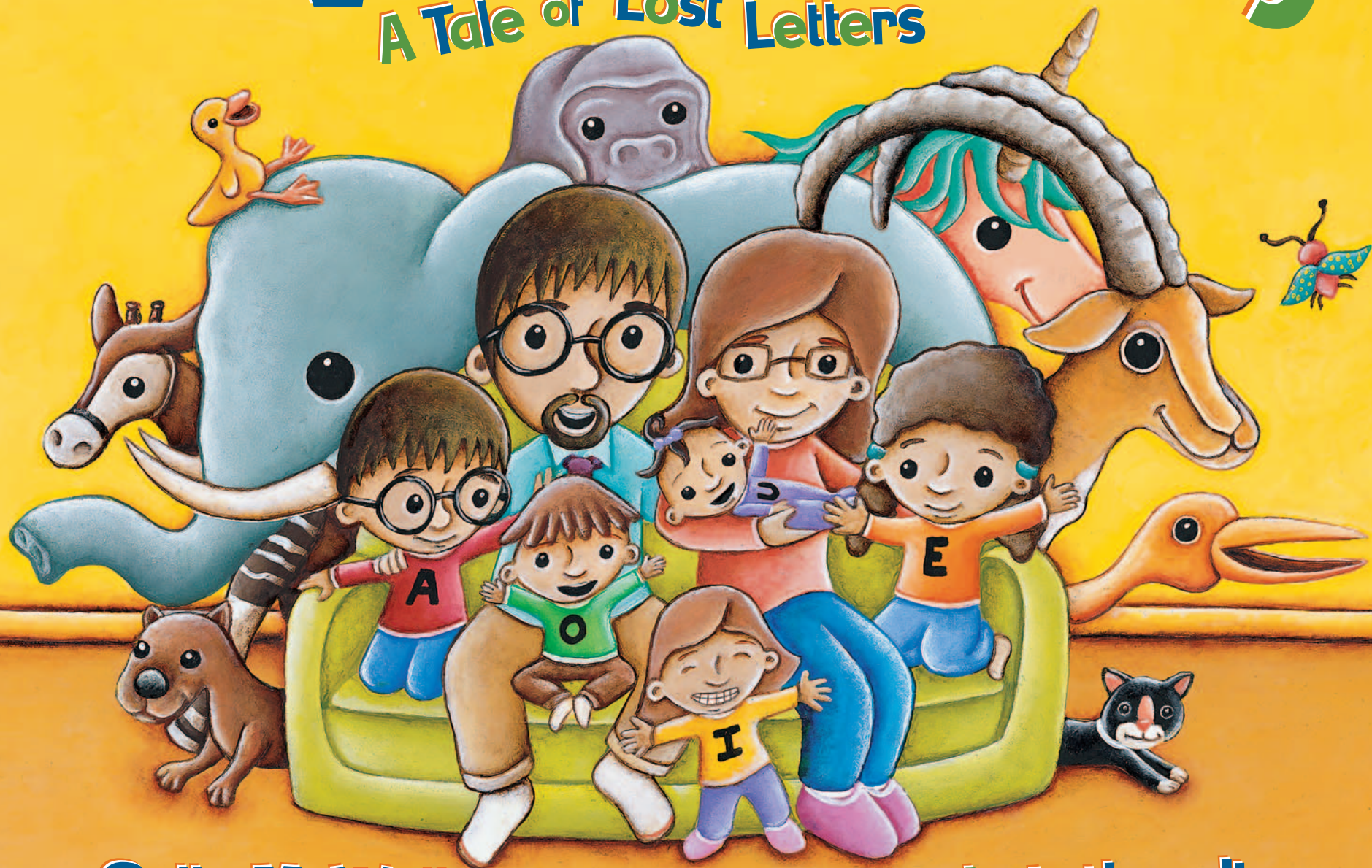


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The Vowel Family

A Tale of Lost Letters



Sally M. Walker illustrations by Kevin Luthardt

Here are the Vowels...

There's

Alan.

Ellen,

Iris,

Otto,

Ursula,

and

sometimes

Aunt Cyndy!

Now imagine
life without them...

Tlknng wld b vr hrd.

Rdng wld b pzzlng.

Can you play the Vowel game?

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What words can you make when you



wndr

pnch

tm

bk

frm

add vowels to the letters below?

lghtr

mrvls

rmbl

fr



The VW Fm!

Tl f Lst Ltrrs



Sll M. Wlkr

llstrtns b

Kvn Lthrdt



For Aisling Power and her siblings, Eoin (pronounced Owen), Ivan, Ursula, and Aidan—the original vowel family. Also for the readers at the Saint Charles (Illinois) Literature Festival, the place where this story was born.

—S.M.W.

To Grandpa Luthardt and Grandpa Walt. In loving memory of Grandma Luthardt and Grandma Mancil. Thank you, Jesus!

—K.L.

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Whn Pm Smth mrrd Sm Vwl, sh sd, "Lf s wndrfl!"
"xcpt whn w tlk," Sm sd. "Tlkng s vr hrd."



Pm rlzd smthng ws wrng.



for **A**lan and **E**llen, the twins, were born,
their parents giggled with glee. Alan
and Ellen's clear speech made sense.





At schl, when the teacher asked Alan's name, he stated, "Call me Alan Vwel."

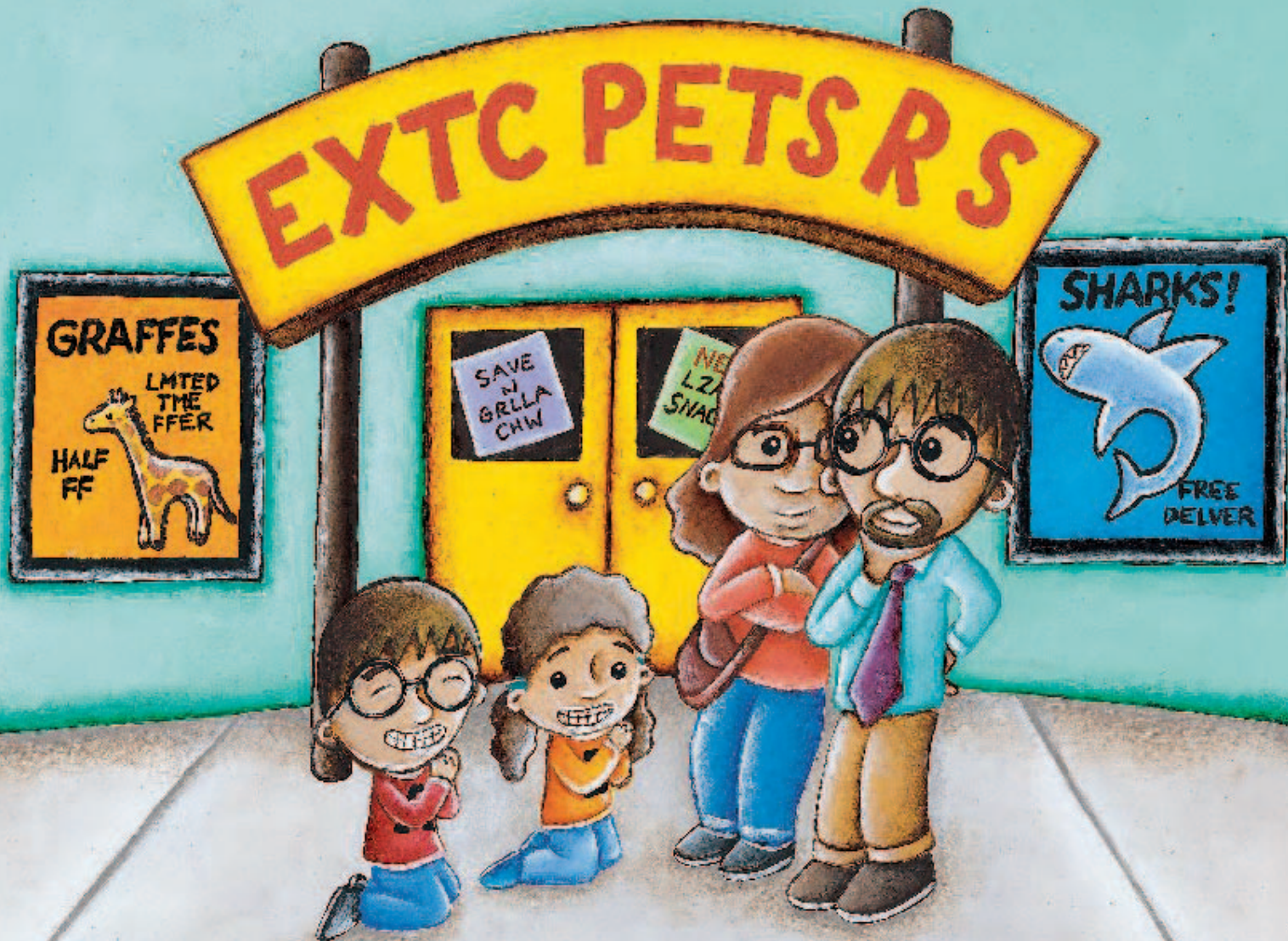
Lfe was better. Bt t wasn't perfect.

"r faml lacks zest," declared Alan and Ellen.

"Papa and Mama, we want pets."

"We'll get a cat and an ape!" answered Sam.

"And an elephant and an egret!" added Pam.









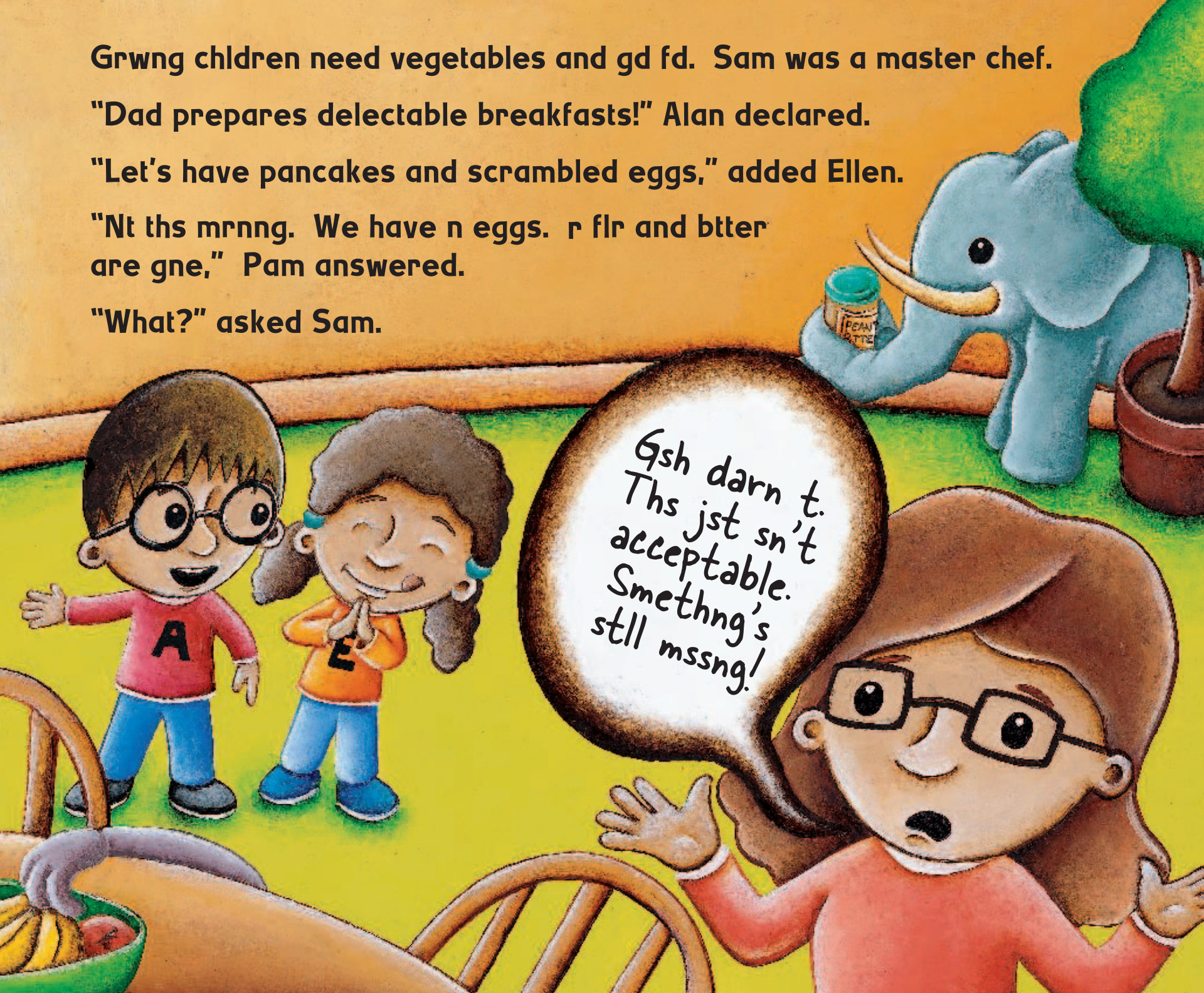
Growing children need vegetables and good food. Sam was a master chef.

"Dad prepares delectable breakfasts!" Alan declared.

"Let's have pancakes and scrambled eggs," added Ellen.

"Not this morning. We have no eggs. no flour and butter are gone," Pam answered.

"What?" asked Sam.

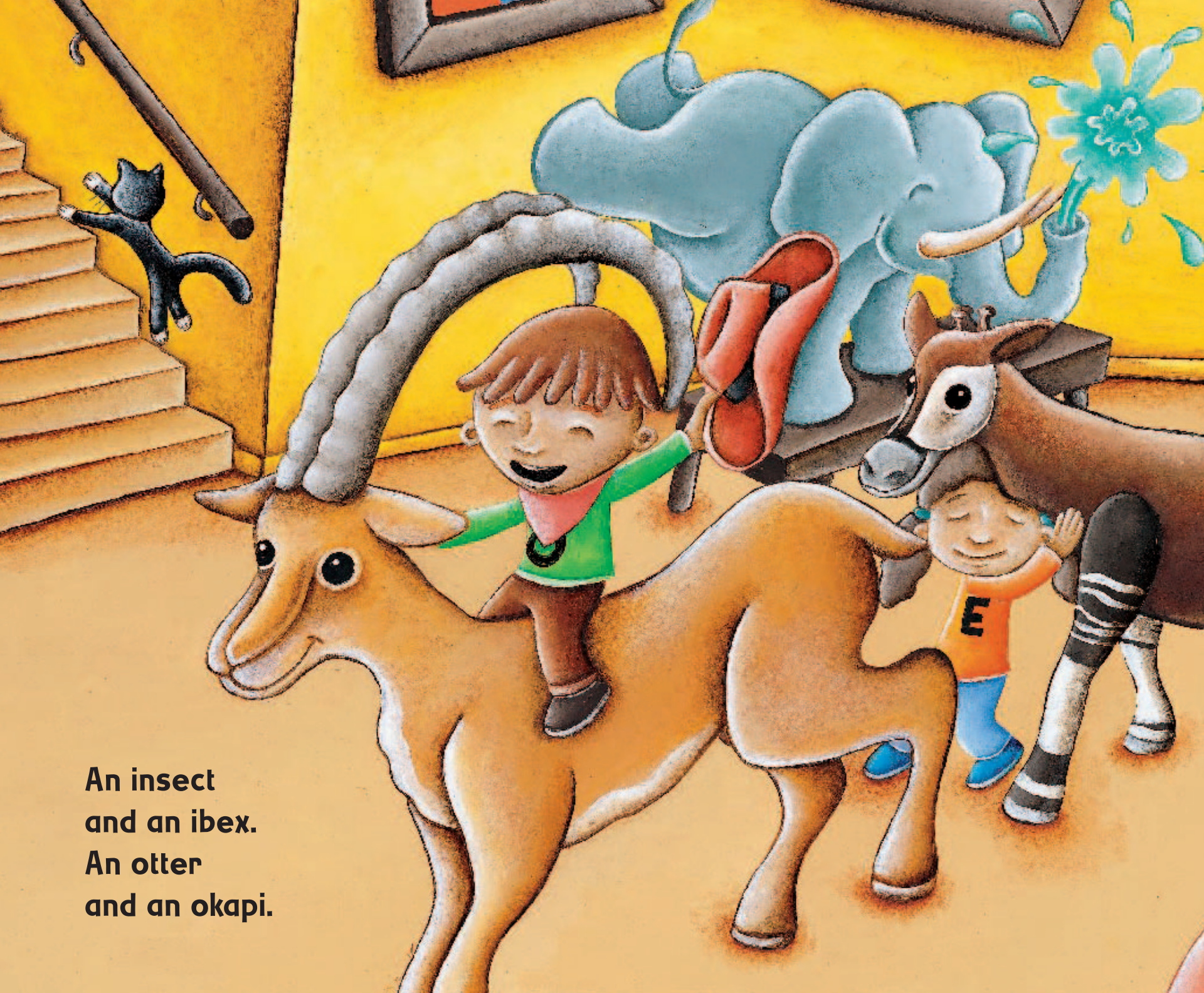


Cndtns mprved after **Iris** and **Otto**,
another pair of twins, joined the famil.



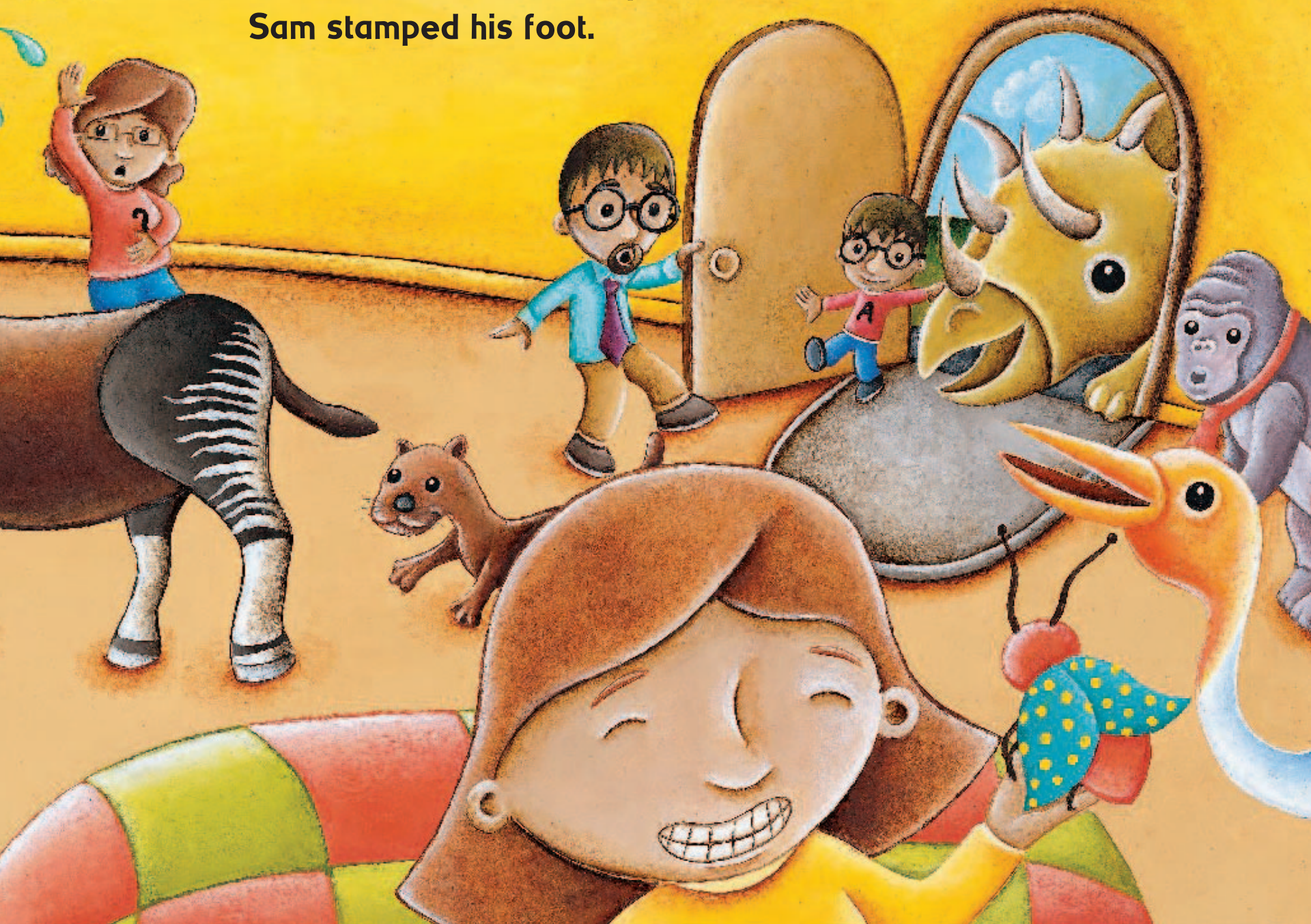


At last, people comprehended when the Vowels said their names! Life became precise, even exceptional. Of course, Iris and Otto got pets too . . .



An insect
and an ibex.
An otter
and an okapi.

However, when Alan tried
to enter with a triceratops,
Sam stamped his foot.







No more animals in this hose!

We're flmoxed.

I'm bffaloed.

That's confsing.

A

E

?

Thank goodness **U**rsula chose
just that moment to be born!



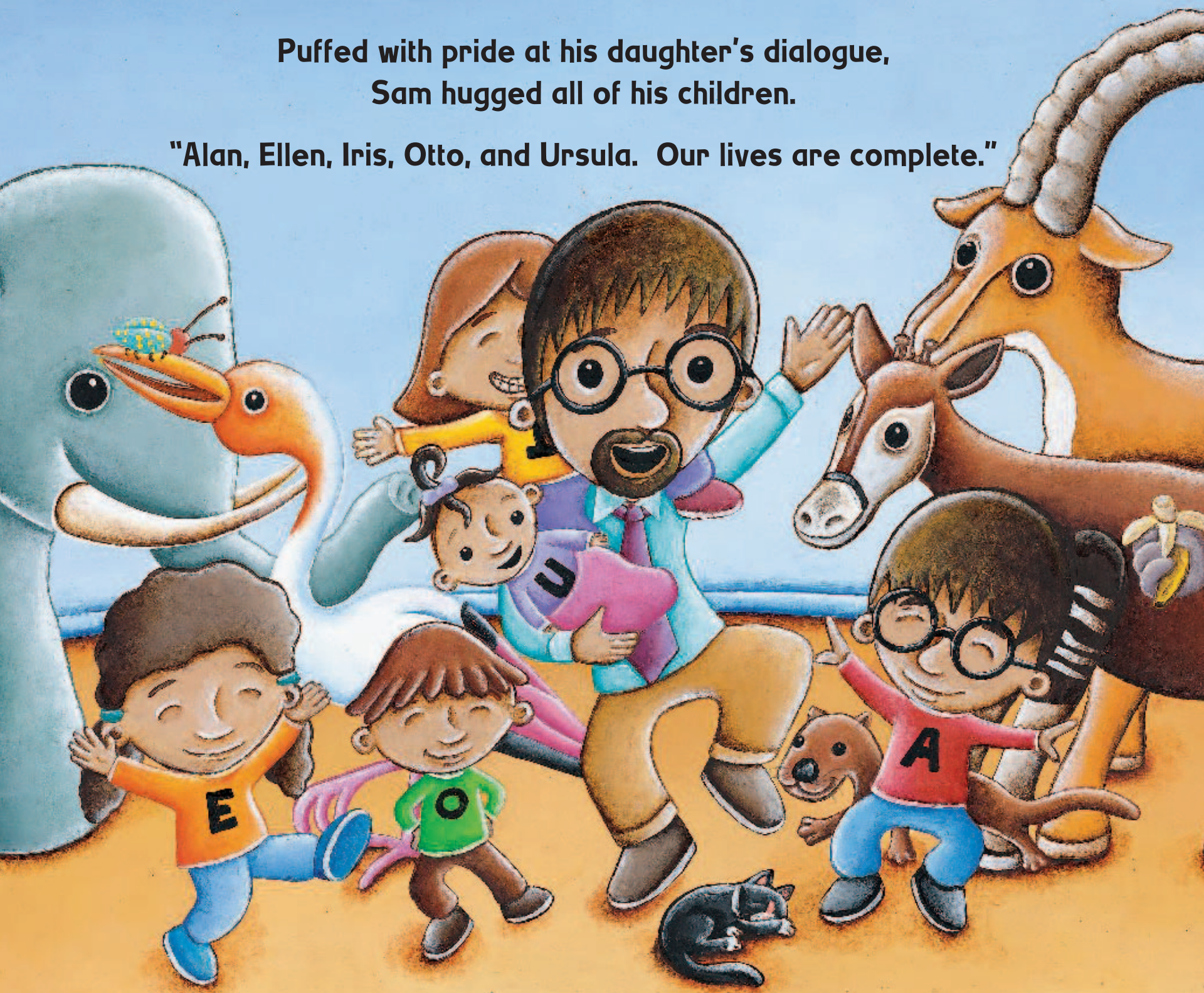
Ursula—born speaking because miracles do occur—pronounced her first words with care.

Although I trusted we would also acquire a duck and a unicorn, it's obvious that Dad said, "CUT IT OUT! No more animals in this house!"



Puffed with pride at his daughter's dialogue,
Sam hugged all of his children.

"Alan, Ellen, Iris, Otto, and Ursula. Our lives are complete."



**"Not quite. We lack a duck and a unicorn.
And a humongous house," Pam replied.**

Since Pam was a master builder, the outrageous situation left her unruffled. "This calls for an excursion to the lumber store," she said.







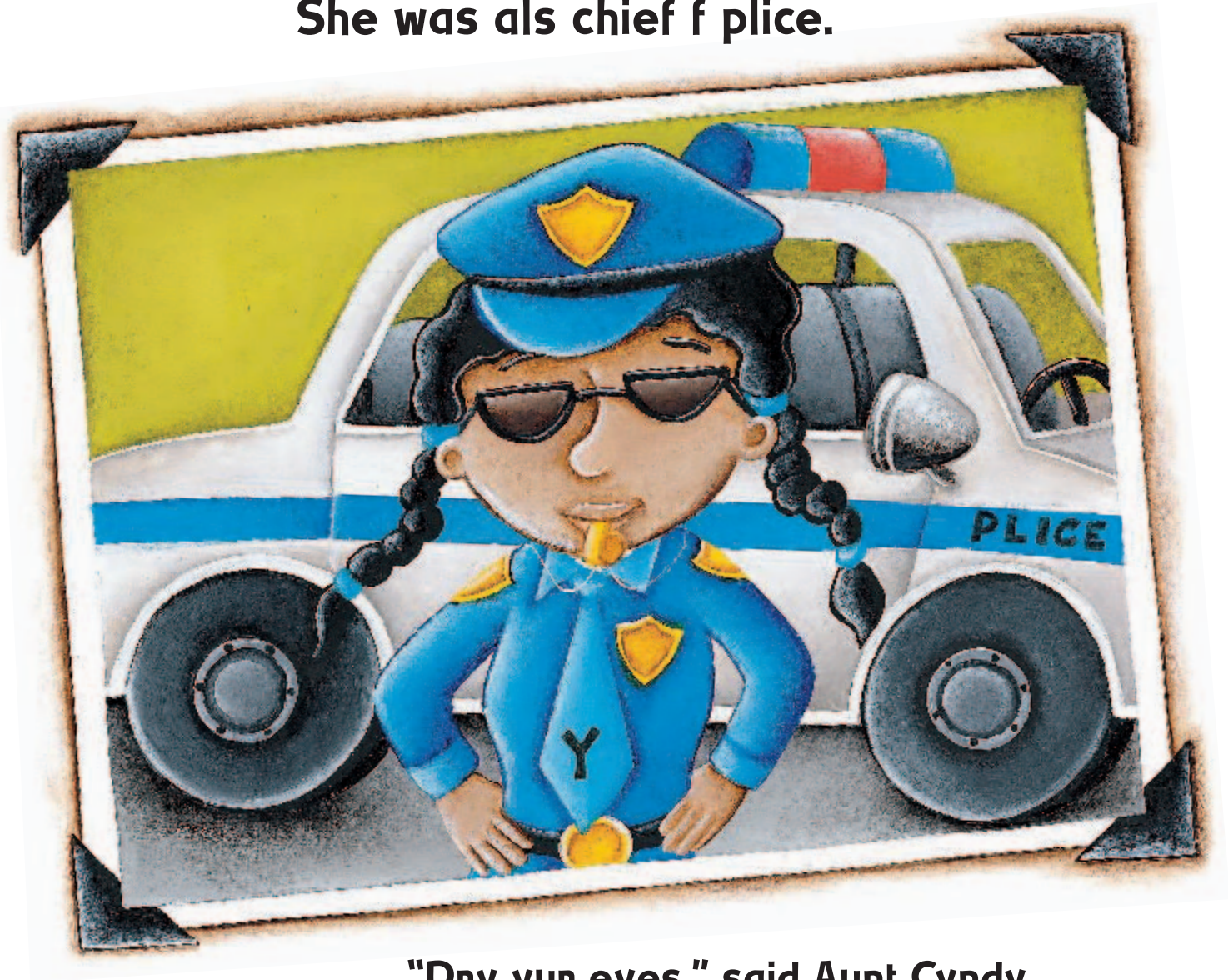
Pam, Sam, and their quintet of kids trooped downtown. Otto trotted until his foot got sore. The poor bo slowed to a stop.

When the famil reached the lumber stre, Pam realized it was 1st. She began t weep. Sam cried buckets. Ellen, Alan, and Ursula bawled till their peepers turned red.

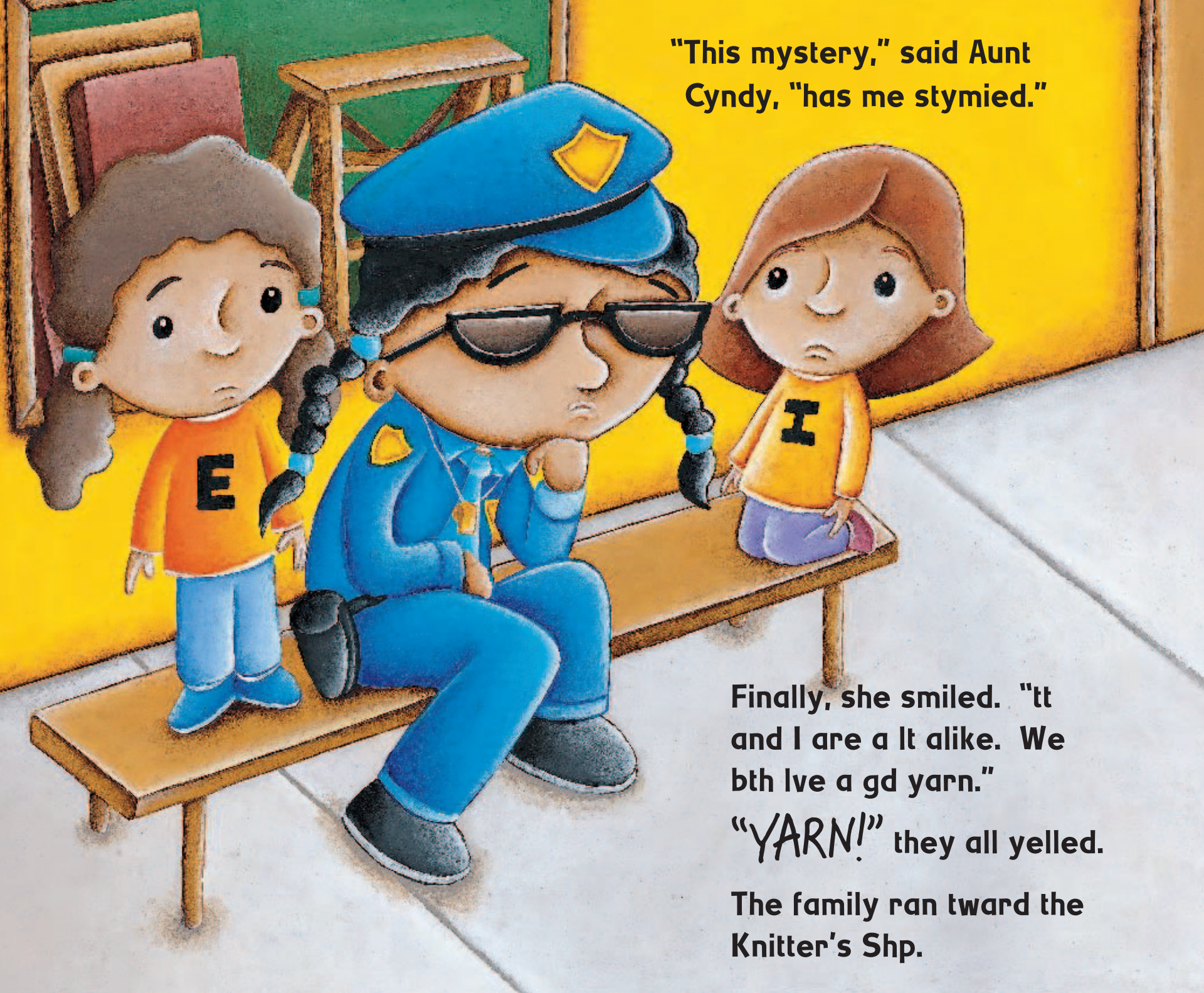


Thank gdness fr Iris, a quick thinker. She whipped ut her cell phne and called Aunt **Cynda**.

Aunt Cyndy was mre than family.
She was als chief f plice.



"Dry yur eyes," said Aunt Cyndy.
"Finding tt requires strategy, nt tears."

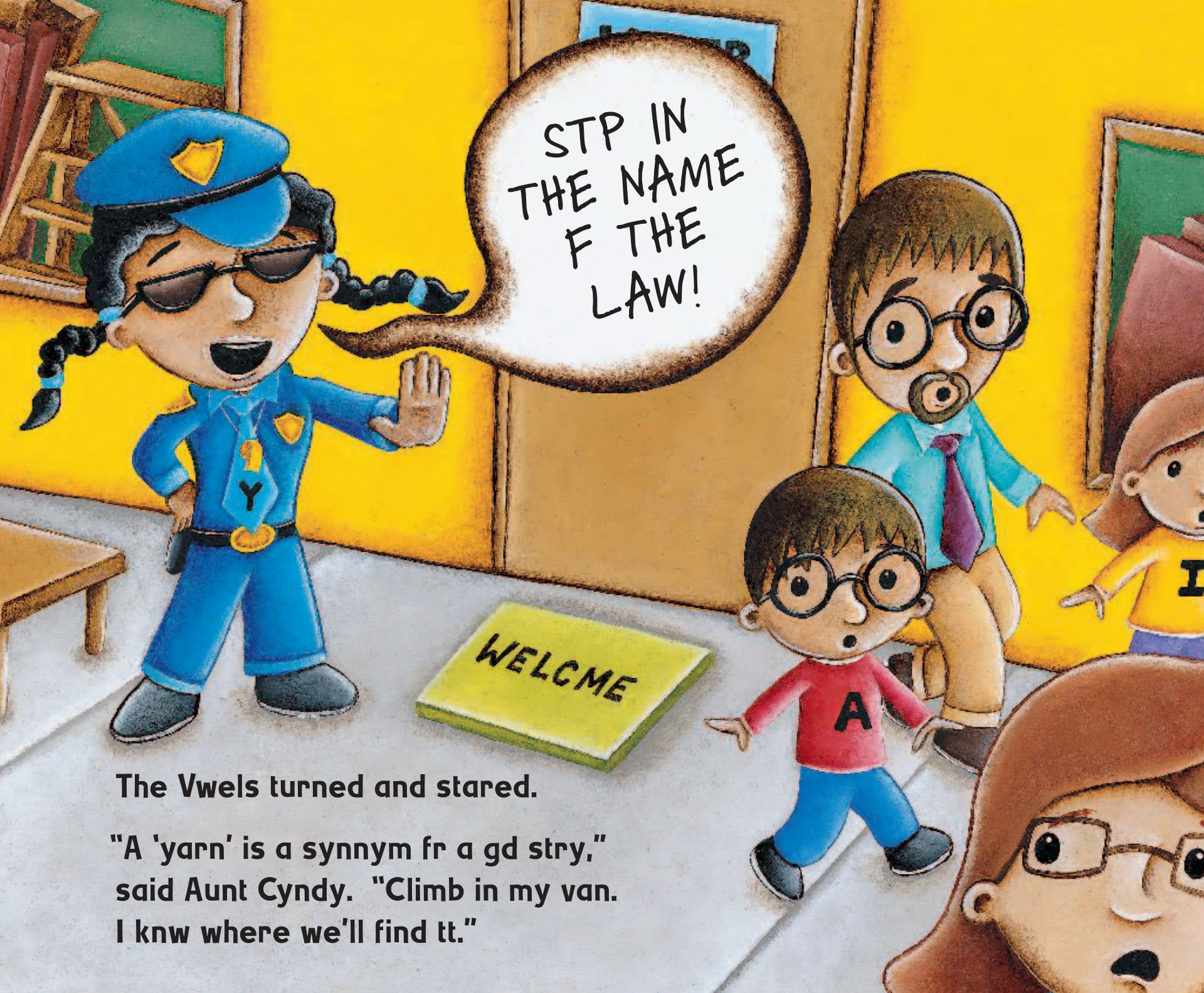


"This mystery," said Aunt
Cyndy, "has me stymied."

Finally, she smiled. "It
and I are alike. We
both have a good yarn."

"**YARN!**" they all yelled.

The family ran toward the
Knitter's Shop.



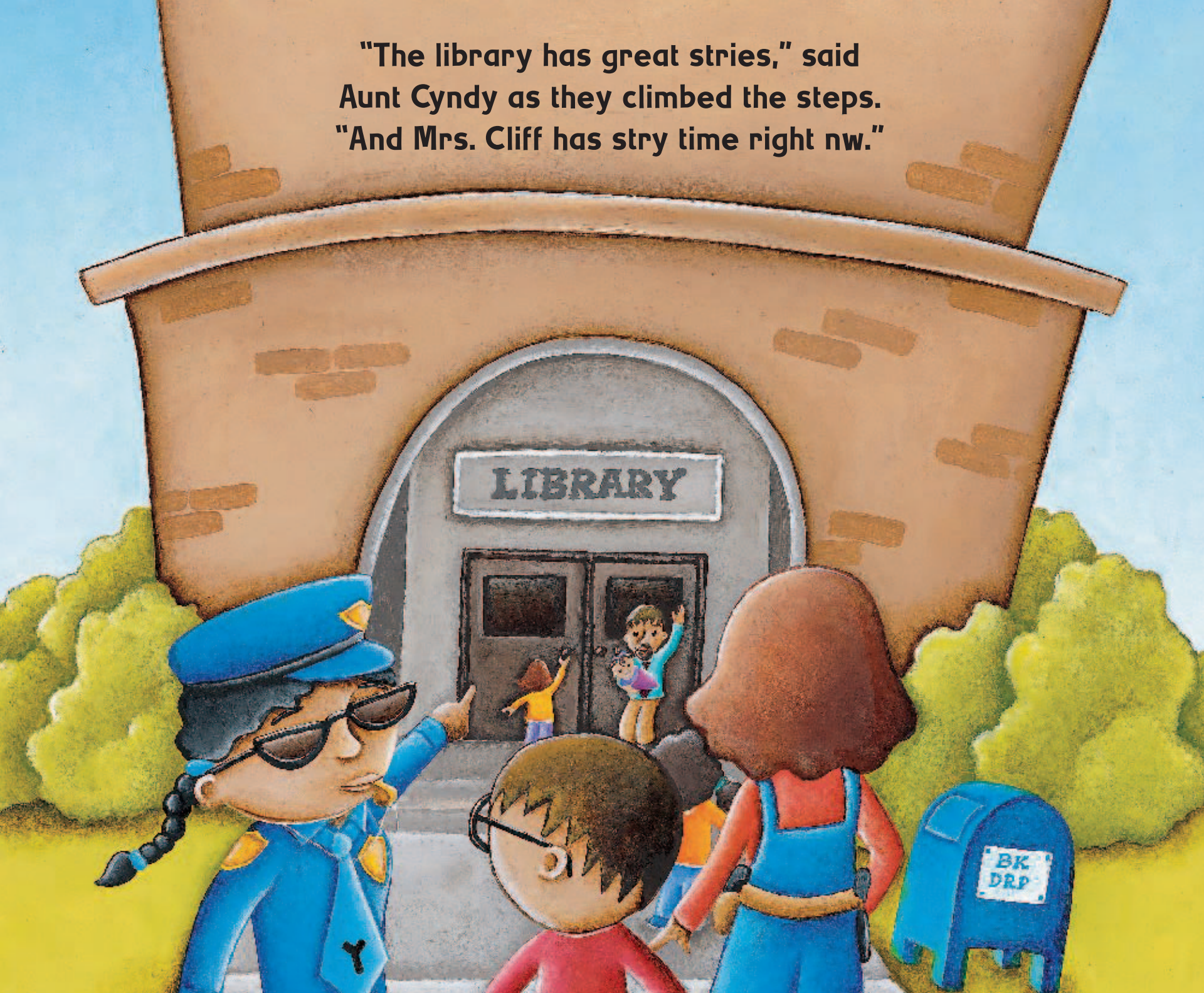
STOP IN
THE NAME
OF THE
LAW!

WELCOME

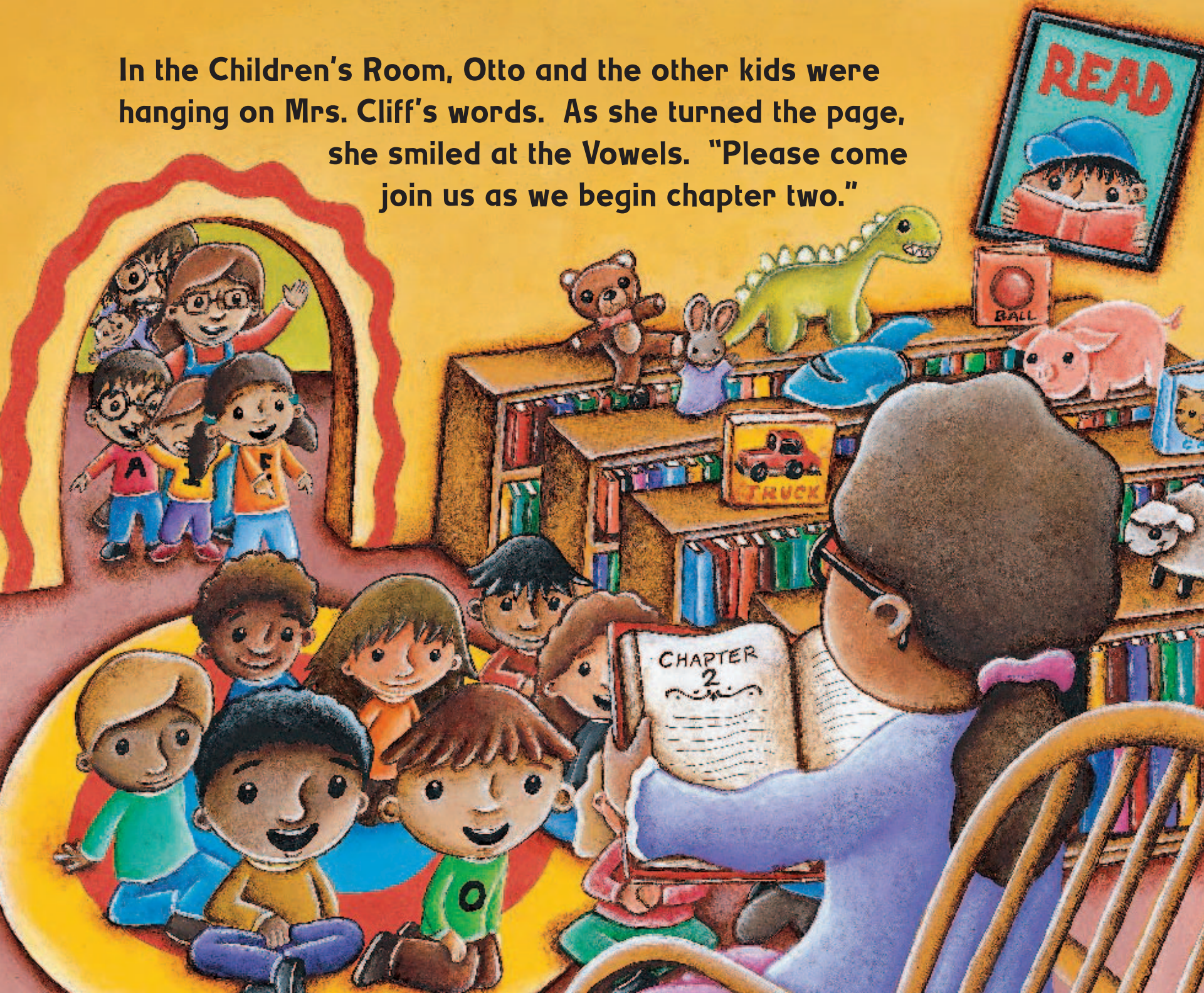
The Vwels turned and stared.

"A 'yarn' is a synnym fr a gd stry,"
said Aunt Cyndy. "Climb in my van.
I knw where we'll find tt."

**"The library has great stries," said
Aunt Cyndy as they climbed the steps.
"And Mrs. Cliff has stry time right nw."**



In the Children's Room, Otto and the other kids were hanging on Mrs. Cliff's words. As she turned the page, she smiled at the Vowels. "Please come join us as we begin chapter two."

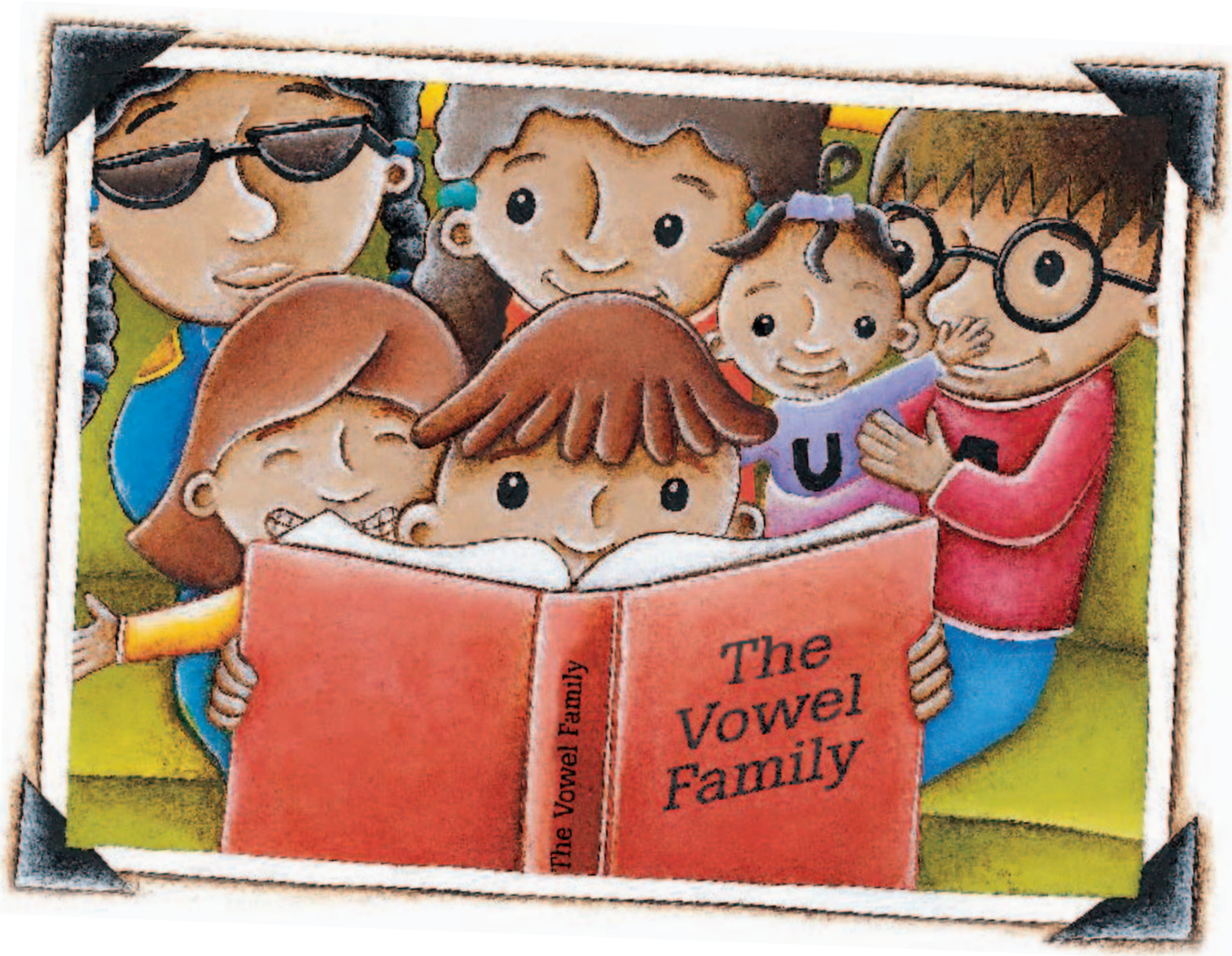


After their eventful outing, the Vowels were glad to go home.





But the next time you visit the library, be sure to look for the Vowels. They go there often. Why?



Because **A**lan, **E**llen, **I**ris, **O**tto, **U**rsula, and *sometimes* Aunt **Cy**ndy are always ready to be part of a good story.

What words can you make when you

frm

bngr

cw

mss

zp





add vowels to the letters below?

h p p

w t c h

w n d r

t r c k

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Sally M. Walker has written many award-winning books for children, including *Secrets of a Civil War Submarine: Solving the Mysteries of the H. L. Hunley*. She thinks the twenty-three vowels in that book's title surely helped it win the Robert F. Sibert Informational Book Award in 2006. Sally lives in DeKalb, Illinois, with her husband and cats. Keep your eye out for her cat Willow, who appears in this book!



Kevin Luthardt is the author and illustrator of several children's picture books, all of which contain vowels. He lives in the Chicago area with his wife, **Alicia**, and their two boys, **Avery** and **Elijah**. For some reason Kevin and **Alicia** have a strong urge to name their next child **I**ggie . . . or **I**rving . . . or **I**rene . . . They are not sure why.



Jacket illustrations
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